

TROUTDALE'S CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The basic standard for citizen involvement in Oregon is Statewide Planning Goal 1, Citizen Involvement. This goal states that each city and county in Oregon “develop a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process”. “Citizen involvement” is participation by people who are not professional planners or government officials. It is a process through which residents take part in developing, administering, and amending local comprehensive plans and land use regulations. It is citizens participating in the planning and decision-making that affect their community.

Goal 1 of the City of Troutdale's Comprehensive Land Use Plan affirms that a major component of the City of Troutdale's Citizen Involvement Program is its Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). CAC members not only represent the interests of their particular neighborhood, some members are selected on the basis of their ties to business, environmental resource organizations, or other community service interests. The CAC reviews the comprehensive land use plan content and implementation measures, and participates in the periodic review process. CAC members monitor neighborhood development to ensure conformance to plan policies and guidelines.

The Troutdale City Council serves as the Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) which is responsible for evaluating the performance of the CAC and the City's overall Citizen Involvement Program. The City's policies with respect to citizen involvement are:

1. Inform the citizens of Troutdale of land use changes affecting their neighborhoods. The City shall continue to involve citizens in all phases of the planning process via the Citizens Advisory Committee, special task forces and other appropriate means.
2. Keep the public informed of land development proposals occurring in their neighborhoods.
3. Attempt to balance the costs of providing public information with the public's right-to-know.

Reasons for Citizen Participation in Planning

There are several reasons why citizens should have an opportunity to participate in planning. The most important is simply that our system of government gives citizens the right to have a strong voice in all matters of public policy, including planning. The law requires that citizens get that opportunity.

A second reason is that only citizens can provide the information needed to develop, maintain, and carry out an effective comprehensive plan. Professional planners and local officials need comments and ideas from those who know the community best: the people who live and work there.

Third, citizen involvement educates the public about planning and land use. It creates an informed community, which in turn leads to better planning.

Fourth, it gives members of the community a sense of ownership of the plan. It fosters cooperation among citizens and between them and their government. That leads to fewer conflicts and less litigation.

Finally, citizen involvement is an important means of enforcing our land use laws. Having citizens informed about planning laws and giving them access to the planning process ensures that the laws are applied properly.

Role of the CAC

Chapter 2.20.090 of the Troutdale Municipal Code explains what role the CAC provides the City:

1. The CAC shall review all legislative amendments to the City's comprehensive plan and all major amendments to land use regulations not reviewed by any other council-sanctioned citizen committee.
2. The Planning Commission may seek the advise of the CAC on quasi-judicial amendments to the comprehensive plan.
3. The CAC may periodically review and advise the Planning Commission and City Council on the citizen involvement program.
4. The CAC will report recommendations on land use issues to the Planning Commission.
5. The CAC shall perform any other duties or functions assigned by the City Council as specified by motion or resolution of the council. In this regard, the CAC operates to provide policy guidance to the council on matters of public interest and to act as a liaison between neighborhoods and interest groups and the City's elected and appointed officials. The CAC will report recommendations to the council regarding issues assigned by the council.